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A SKETCH OF EVENTS IN THE EARLY  
SETTLEMENT OF CHEROKEE COUNTY, IOWA



*Compliments of B. F. Gee,  
Oct 3, 1890*

### A SKETCH OF EVENTS IN THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF CHEROKEE COUNTY.

A number of hard working, intelligent men, in Milford, Massachusetts, fired with the desire to acquire the birthright of every American citizen, a good farm and comfortable home-stead, under the leadership of one Dr. Russell, organized a joint stock company, comprising fifty-four members, twenty-four of whom were heads of families, with a design to settle somewhere in the then "Far West." Having carefully examined the maps, the present site of Sioux City was determined on as the objective point of the colony. The Big Sioux was supposed to be a navigable stream, the Missouri certainly was, and at the confluence of these rivers, they naturally reasoned, there must yet be an important city. The truth of these reasonings they have lived to see verified, as Sioux City is not only a handsome place, but the very best trading mart in the entire West.

A quota of the company was to set out in advance, and after making suitable locations, surveys, and entries, the others were to follow the coming season.

On the 11th day of February, 1856, some twelve or fourteen of the company set out, taking with them such necessary household effects as they deemed indispensable. Crossing the Mississippi at Lyons, two of the company, Carlton Corbett and Lemuel Parkhurst, set out in advance to collect such information as they could, while the remainder came slowly along with the loaded teams. On arriving at Sioux City, they found to their chagrin the location appropriated, some daring spirits having lo-

cated there the year previous, and at this time contained a U. S. land office, two hotels, and one store, all built of logs. The disappointment was a very serious one, but the land explorers comprehended the situation and determined to look around there. They proceeded up the Big Sioux for a considerable distance, but the scarcity of timber in that region caused them to retrace their steps. Returning to Sioux City, they met with R. Perry, Esq., now of Pilot Rock, who informed them of the beauty and abundance of timber along the Little Sioux, in Cherokee county. Parkhurst remained in Sioux City, while Corbett and a man named Martin set out across the prairie towards Correctionville, thence up the river to Big Grove in Pilot. Here they slept over night, and the next day proceeded up to the present site of the old town, swimming streams in their way. Having satisfied themselves that this was the finest country they had yet seen, after rambling hither and thither for two days, set out for Correctionville, and there fortunately met the teams of their friends they had left at the Mississippi. This was in the month of May, 1856. The entire company consisted of about twenty souls, of whom some are still living in this county. A log house was built near the site of Davis' grist mill, which was long known as the Cherokee House, and for some time had to be the home of the entire colony. The two teams belonging to the company were immediately put to work, and 150 acres were broken for a crop, of which some 30 acres were planted with corn. This was caught by frost in the fall and greatly injured, yet it was a fair crop. They also raised 200 bushels of excellent potatoes, and some small vegetables. Whatever



else they needed had to be brought from Council Bluffs, a distance of 130 miles. During the summer a village was laid out. 320 acres were laid off in town lots, and all the lands adjoining the village plat was made into 20 acre lots, though a few contained as many as 60 acres. A plat of the village is still to be seen in the Recorder's office. The village has on paper quite an imposing appearance, having in the centre a splendid square, into which all the principal streets converge. One thing that is worthy of note in this connection is, that though these "pilgrim fathers" of our county, were over 100 miles from a town, wholly unacquainted with the surroundings, and having such an immense country to select from, should have just hit upon the locality destined to be one of the finest cities in Iowa. One would suppose these men had been guided by even more than human foresight, to think, that where these twenty wanderers cast their lot, 130 miles beyond an outpost, would, in a few years, be the centre of a great trading mart, through which the iron horse coursed many times each day.

Four additional houses were built in the fall. L. Parkhurst built one near the residence of F. W. Huxford, Esq., G. W. Labourveau one near the court house, and C. Corbett with B. W. & Ly-sander Sawtell and Wm. Holden built one over the river. B. Holbrook built one which is still standing near to the old fort. Preparations were now made for the coming winter which turned out to be one of the severest on record; memorable throughout the United States for its depth of snow and severe storms.

Dr. Russell returned to Massachusetts, to make preparations for the

spring exodus. Mr. Phipps also went east. Of those still here, who passed the first winter, are J. A. Brown, S. Parkhurst, G. W. Labourveau, C. Corbett, and A. Haynes.

In the month of February, a hunting party of Sioux Indians passed down the river. They halted at the settlement and everything appeared most friendly. They proceeded down to Smithland, where the whites demanded where they were going. The Indians replied they were going to shake hands with the Omahas; but the whites made them surrender their arms. This enraged these savages, who immediately turned up the stream breathing vengeance on the white settlers. Having had their arms stolen by white men, they concluded white men must make restitution, consequently, they entered every house on their way, insulting the inmates and taking what guns they could find. Arriving at Cherokee, furious with passion for the wrong they had sustained, they acted in a brutal and insolent manner. What arms they had plundered were now directed against the whites, and the colonists, scattered about as they were, were forced to surrender their guns and yield to whatever indignity a blood-thirsty savage might offer.—Cattle were stolen, the scanty provisions seized and devoured by them, and even compelled the settlers to cook it for them, standing the while with cocked guns to dispatch anyone who might chance to displease them. They remained three days, feasting and carousing, seeming to debate, whether to murder the entire colony or not. On the third night, Mr. Labourveau and S. Parkhurst returned from Sac City. The Indians, suspicious that the Smithland people might be on their trail, were anxious to



know where these men came from, but the cunning of the white man played on the fears of the savage; they would not tell, and the Indians, apprehensive of danger, set off in the morning in haste. Hurrying up the river, when fairly beyond what they considered the possibility of pursuit, they became ungovernably furious, and arriving at Spirit Lake, massacred the defenceless colony, man, woman and child, forming one of the darkest and bloodiest chapters in the history of Indian ferocity and vengeance. For this outrage the people of Smithland were responsible, and the effects on the settlement of this county were most disastrous. When the horrible tale of Spirit Lake reached the ears of the Cherokee settlement, every heart was sickened at the recital of this tale of blood. Parties from Smithland advised the colony to leave, and early in February not a settler was left, some going to Ashland, some to Omaha, and others to Smithland. Soon as the place was deserted, the people of Smithland visited the houses of the settlers, and to their eternal shame be said, plundered what was left. Matters at this time looked gloomy indeed. News had gone to Massachusetts that all the colony had been murdered. Dr. Russell's society became disorganized, and abandoned the project. The people here were disheartened, and the bright visions that fancy had woven, were torn by cruel realities. In the month of May most of them returned, and put in considerable spring crop.

A school was taught during the summer in the old Cherokee House, by Mrs. Parkhurst, the funds being sent from Massachusetts to sustain it. Among those who attended that school, are George, Thomas, & Clara

Brown; Henry, Frank, & Addie Phipps. Nor was the course of instruction any way superficial; Miss Phipps has since taught school herself, and is one of the most advanced and successful teachers in the county.

In the month of August the county of Cherokee was organized at a special election. The following officers were elected:

- A. P. Thayer, *County Judge.*
- B. W. Sawtell, *District Clerk.*
- C. Corbett, *Prosecuting Attorney.*
- G. W. Labourveau, *Rec'r & Treas.*
- S. W. Haynes, *County Sheriff.*
- G. W. Bannister, *Coroner.*

In all about 23 votes were cast.— There was levied for county purpose 6 mills to the dollar; for state,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mills; for schools, 2 mills; and for roads, 3 mills. The number of acres entered was 46,178, valued at \$92,356; 371 town lots, valued \$3,710, were assessed and \$1,754 of personal property. The total value of all property was \$97,820, from which was risen \$1,222,75.

The first warrant ever issued in Cherokee county, was drawn October 2d, 1858, for the sum of \$4 30, payable to D. N. Stoddard, on ac't of services as chairman on Road No. 1, to Plymouth county line, signed by A. P. Thayer, County Judge.— The records of 1858 & '59, are very neatly kept and easily read. The bulk of the warrants issued is to pay bounties on "seals of prairie wolves", each scalp being \$1 50, the first of this species being issued to Mallon Holbrook, Dec. 6th, 1858.

The first bridge over the Sioux river, was built by a man named Blain, for \$1,600, to pay which, a 7 mill tax was voted by the people, 14 voting for the tax, and 1 voting against it.

The large accounts of Mills & Co., of Des Moines, soon found their way



into the courts, the first appearing in August of that year, for \$27 96 and a second in October 18th, for \$223,06. These men have amassed a fortune out of the new counties of Iowa, if others can exhibit such liberal dealing as Cherokee county.

The management of the finances seem to have been scrupulously honest. One is surprised in looking over the accounts to see such small salaries attached to the different offices, and the reasonable charges for all work done. These men had the handling of large sums of money and co'd have enriched themselves if they chose.

The following is the revenue of the county for the past 12 years:

1858,	\$1,222,75.
1859,	3,343,30.
1860,	2,039,86.
1861,	2,676,91.
1862,	1,192,00.
1863,	1,857,54.
1864,	2,891,50.
1865,	3,193,65.
1866,	3,902,33.
1867,	4,000,00.
1868,	5,178,00.
1869,	19,797,87.

In the fall of 1857, a number of the colonists left, carrying with them dismal accounts of bleak prairies, bloody Indians and the fearful hardships of pioneer life. These accounts sealed the fate of colonization for years afterward; but the few brave men and women who still struggled on, have since lived to congratulate themselves that nothing could shake their faith in the future of Cherokee county.

The Dubuque & Sioux City Railroad Land Grant passed Congress in 1856, and in '57 a provisional survey of the road was made. Report then was that the railway would be constructed inside of three years. That

it should be built at an early date was the intention of Congress, and to reimburse the company for building and maintaining a road through a country that would yield small returns, the land grant was made; yet fourteen years elapsed before the road was completed; but the land grant was retained, being renewed to the defaulting company. The ray of hope the settlers had seen in this direction, flickered with varying shades during these eventful fourteen years. Once, the last vestige of hope, that a railway would be built through the county, at all, had been nigh extinguished. Villainous speculators packed the lobby of the legislature, to change the road about twenty miles to the south of where it now is, and to the Hon. Eli Johnson, who manfully fought these corrupt combinations, almost single-handed, Cherokee owes a debt of gratitude. He represented this district in the year 1868, when pliant railway tools were rife in the legislature, but truthful and honest, he triumphed over corruption and bribery.

There was but little occurring in the history of this county to note for a number of years. In 1860, she had a population of 58, but in 1863, of 20 only. Isolated as she was from the rest of the Union, she contributed more than her quota to the army during the rebellion. Her war record, we will venture, is unsurpassed by any county in the entire Union. The tricksters at Sioux City, credited to Woodbury county several of our young men, who, inspired with devotion to the cause of the nation, enrolled themselves as volunteers, and then Cherokee sent out gray-headed veterans to fill the places of those stolen by Woodbury county. Eight in all were enrolled as soldiers, leaving only



five men in the whole county.

Matters went on very gently for a number of years, excluded from the world, the people of Cherokee formed a civilization of their own, though many were the hardships and inconveniences suffered. Sioux City was the nearest point to get mail, and trudging 60 miles to get a letter or dispatch one can scarcely be classed as "excellent facilities." The railroad spoken of so much, began to appear a myth in the eyes of the settlers.—Scarcely an immigrant ever thought of Cherokee county, and the few settlers left, were disheartened and often tempted to leave it. In 1863, the Homestead Act passed by the General Government, once more shot a ray of hope into the hearts of the old and trusting pioneers, but the fearful Indian massacre of St. Ulm, Minn., sent a thrill of horror to every heart and seemed once more to fix the destiny of the colony. The blood-stained visions of Spirit lake haunted the old settlers, and a fear that the indescribable horrors of an Indian war were about to break upon them, paralyzed the shattered remnants of a once prosperous colony. For a considerable time, the Indians had been troublesome along the frontier. Companies had been organized, and troops stationed at different points, to guard the settlements. A number of volunteers under Captain Millard, of Sioux City, were placed at Cherokee, while others were posted at Spirit Lake and other points. When news of the massacre reached the colony, Capt. Millard advised the settlement to leave, as he felt unable to afford sufficient protection. The people took his advice, and thus a second time Cherokee county was depopulated. It was during this campaign the stockade and fort were built, both

of which are still standing as a reminder of the trying ordeal through which the early settlers passed.—Most of them went to Sioux City, where the Indian fever was raging to its fullest extent. Others went eastward, but of all that left only six returned. Mr. Corbett was treasurer, and he returned in the fall to collect the taxes as the law required. The commander had, in case of danger, notified him, that he and his family could find shelter in the fort. The census returns of 1863, show there were but 10 males and 5 females in the county. The census of 1860 returned a population of 58, showing pretty clearly that matters were in a most unfavorable condition. During the winter of '62—'63, the only whites in the county, with the exception of the soldiers, were Mr. & Mrs. Corbett, Mr. Brown and family, Orange Wigh, of Pilot Rock, and Robert Perry of the same place.

A short time before the arrival of the military, an incident of quite an exciting nature transpired in the settlement. Scouts had been employed in various directions, to learn and report all they could concerning the movements of the savages. Two men of that persuasion, named, Sam. and Andrew Purell, were staying over night on the premises of G. W. Labourveau. During the night, they were awakened, and discovered a couple of Indians making off with a horse each, one, the property of Mr. Labourveau, and the other, that of Andrew Purell. They immediately gave pursuit, and each of the brothers fired, Andrew's shot taking fatal effect. Sam. hit his man, and according to report, the effects proved fatal shortly afterwards, but he got away with Andrew's horse to the Indian camp. The horse so rescued is still



owned by Mr. Labourveau. This is the only case of human life taking in the history of the county. Like the horse in the fable, that took on a rider to be avenged on the stag, the good people of Cherokee found the troops a source of greater trouble, as they committed all manner of depredations, and proved a greater annoyance than the Indians, though all bear testimony, those of Millard's company behaved well, and also those of Brackett's battalion, which latter were the last troops ever stationed in this county, the fort being abandoned in 1866. George Filer, the present sheriff, belonged to one of the early companies posted here, and became so prepossessed with the natural resources of the county, that he returned after his term of service.

In the fall of 1865, Mr. Phipps returned from the army, having followed Sherman on his victorious march through the confederacy. Labourveau and Bannister had returned the previous spring. It was this year that T. B. Twitford, of bridge fame, made his first appearance in the county, and utilized the first of his numerous water-powers, by erecting a saw mill where Messrs. Hiller & Bliss are now building their flouring mill. This saw mill was of immense value to the entire Northwest, as previous to this, Phipps' saw pit was the only means of supplying lumber to builders.

The census of 1865, return 9 residences, with a population of 52, eight of whom were militia, 29 males and 23 females, only 10 of whom were entitled to vote, 24 being under 21 yrs of age. Of horses, there were 21, and of neat cattle, 98. Only 18 acres of spring wheat were sown, 23 acres of oats,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  of barley, 38 acres of potatoes,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres of sorghum, produc-

ing 38 gallons of syrup. In the year 1861, there were 68 neat cattle and 8 horses in the county, an increase in four years, of 30 cattle and 13 horses, while the population had decreased by 14 in number.

For a number of years, the settlement had had a monthly mail. At first, the mail was carried by Badeaux & Nesson, from Mankato, Minn., to Sioux City; afterwards the route was changed to Sioux City and Jackson. Byron Holbrook was the first postmaster, but he shortly afterwards resigned and C. Corbett was appointed. In the year 1866, a weekly mail was established, and so continued until the fall of 1870, at which time a daily mail east and west afforded the citizens complete facilities. During the year '67, quite considerable additions were made to the population of the county. At the election of 1868, 64 votes were polled. Cherokee had the honor of electing a resident of the county to the State Legislature, in the person of Eli Johnson. During this session of the legislature, the Dubuque and Sioux City railroad was located to run through Cherokee county. Engineers immediately went to work in earnest, and in two years from that time the iron horse went snorting over the beautiful prairie lands of Cherokee. A store was opened about this time in the "Old Village," by a Mr. Foskett, who was in partnership with F. W. Huxford. He soon found a neighbor in the person of Mr. Van Eps. A little blacksmithing had been done by Jacob Fordney, but to Mr. Herrick belongs the honor of having the first shop, and conducting the trade as it ought to be. This year, also, witnessed the erection of a saw mill in Pilot township, by a Mr. Rogers, who, in 1870, placed a run of stones in it for grist-



ing, making the first flour in the country. The mill is a valuable acquisition, and does excellent work.

Cherokee, in 1868, had 1012 acres of land cultivated; 146 horses; 728 cattle; 18 sheep; 6 mules; 177 milch cows, and 108 yoke of working oxen, valued at \$7,976, and her population consisted of 227.

Work on the railway, in 1869, proceeded with vigor, making busy times; during this year her population increased to 459, and the withdrawal of her lands from cash entry, put an effectual check to speculation—the curse of all new counties. The railway left the village about a mile to the east, which put an effectual check to the growth of the latter. The village had sprung up with amazing rapidity, and brought it to an influx of frontier business men, and a few professionals. Messrs. Kellogg & Lewis, Attorneys, and M. S. Butler, Physician, were the first to locate in their callings. In the fall, the railway from Sioux City, was finished to the centre of the county, now known as the village of Hazard, which remained the terminus up to the month of April, 1870.

The spring of 1870, was one of astonishing activity; immigrants were flocking in by hundreds, so that in June, the population, according to the census report, was 1937, and by the last of December, could not have been less than 3500. Business men rushed in in large numbers, impelled by the fine prospects. For some time great doubt was entertained that a depot would be located at the present village of Cherokee, which greatly retarded her onward march, nor was the question finally settled until the month of August, at which time not more than 10 houses were in it. Mr. Fife opened the first store, taking

the risk of a depot. He was soon followed by others—Gourlay & Wilson, Drs. Cleaves and West, Attorney Cowles, and Judge Wellman, W. F. Harriman, Luther & Rice, C. F. Culver, Jas. Archer and H. P. Hobart, H. Nye, and a host of other business men, so that at the close of the year, the village contained 94 houses and places of business, with a population of not less than 300. In February, '71, application was made for articles of incorporation, which have not been consummated at this writing. In June, there were in the county 1244 cattle; 444 horses; 36 mules; 39 sheep, and 70 swine. The total valuation of all personal property was \$79,979,55 an increase, we will venture, unequalled by any county in the United States.

In January, the publication of a newspaper was commenced by J. F. Ford, called the *Cherokee Chief*. In October, the *Chief* emerged into the *Times*, published by R. Buchanan, and has a large and growing circulation.

Besides the village of Cherokee, the county has three other villages, each having two daily mails, affording mail facilities ahead of hundreds of inland towns in the Empire State. Financially the county of Cherokee is the peer of all the counties in Northern Iowa, having been so economically managed that her debt is too insignificant for mention, and her roads and bridges are far ahead of what is usually found in a new county.

An able article from the pen of the County Attorney, Eugene Cowles, gives a consecutive account of the official proceedings.

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Cherokee county has the best water in Iowa, and more timber than any ten neighboring counties all together.



## HOMES FOR ALL.

The comforts of a good home are not unappreciated even by the most indifferent, though in the east, the acquisition of a homestead is so far beyond the reach of the poor classes that their ambition seldom soars so high. Where land is from \$50 to \$200 per acre there is little use of a laboring man aspiring to the ownership of a farm. At most he can acquire but a few acres, and these cost him the savings of a lifetime. After having acquired his ten or twenty acres, he finds he must still toil on with unremitting perseverance, thro' every changing season, to be rewarded with a scanty, miserable pittance that is forced from a reluctant soil.— He hears that in this free America, there is land to be had as a gift from the general government, land already cleared, of trees and stumps; land from which the rocks and stones have been all removed; land clothed with rich, luxuriant grasses; land intersected with creeks and rivers; land, the fertility of which, none has ever dared to call in question; land, such as outrivals the grassy meadows of the Netherlands, or the verdant plateaux of sunny Italy. This he regards as an idle tale. He cannot believe that, what it requires a man of fortune to attain in the east, is offered to him a gift by the United States, in the west. He seems to consider there is a trap somewhere; it cannot be a living reality; there is an allurement, an enchantment, in fact, a deception in the matter. He is afraid the people want him out west to plunder him, and then set him adrift. He knows many have gone west and written back such glowing accounts, but these he fears have gone into the plundering trade and only wish for vic-

tus. Some he knows have come back, cursing the fates that ever sent them west, and pronouncing anathemas on all who talk "west." Tossed between Seylla and Charibdis, the poor doubting Thomas at last fossilizes and dies as he has lived, the child, if not of poverty at least penury.

But how is it with the stout-hearted man who is not afraid to deny himself the comforts that naturally surround an old and well populated region. He ignores the present for the future, and that future is not far in advance. Placing his little all in transit, he arrives at Dubuque, and then takes the Dubuque & Sioux City Railroad for this county, where he sees such magnificent prairies as never greet the eye of the traveller from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He gazes over these glorious lawns, fertile beyond expression and beautiful beyond conception; here he resolves to pitch his tent, selects his quarter section and finds for the first time in his life he is wealthy. By the generous bequest of the government he is a landed proprietor, of 160 acres of land, superior to any 160 acres in the Alleghany slope. Of course he finds thorns as well as roses, but the roses possess virtues that take away every sting, the thorns may inflict. He gets a humble dwelling to shelter himself and his loved ones, who are all content to "labor and wait." The first year he grows vegetables enough to feed the family so that famine is not among the evils that can overtake him. The second year he has not only bread, but abundance of grain to sell; comfort need not now be denied. His humble house is exchanged for one commodious and pleasant, his farm is equal to those of a hundred years' cultivation in the east, while it is stocked in a manner that



no eastern man can understand. He lives the remainder of his life in comparative ease, and dies at last at a ripe old age, laden with wealth and honors.

## A SYNOPSIS OF OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS FROM 1858 to 1871.

The legal history of the county is somewhat obscure for the period of about two years after its organization as a county, from the fact, that there were no suitable books to record the official transactions of the county officers in, and they were, of necessity, kept on loose sheets of paper. After books were procured, these minutes were not all transcribed as should have been done, and in the various changes that have since been made, these papers have been lost or destroyed.

On the 1st of November, 1858, G. W. F. Sherwin, then County Judge, ordered suitable books for the county offices, from Mills & Co., of Des Moines, and since that time, there is no difficulty in tracing the official proceedings of the different county officers. At the general election in 1858, the following county officers were elected:

G. W. F. Sherwin, *Co. Judge.*

B. W. Sawtell, *District Clerk.*

G. W. Bannister, *Sheriff.*

G. Coonly, *Supt. of Schools.*

At this election there were 19 votes east. On the 22d of November, Mr. Labourneau resigned the office of Treasurer & Recorder, and Lemuel Parkhurst was appointed to fill the vacancy. On the 6th of December, H. D. Betts was appointed Swamp Land Agent, and a contract made with him to select and plat the swamp lands for 2 cents per acre. In accord-

ance with this contract, Mr. Betts selected and platted twenty-six thousand and four hundred acres as *swamp land*, and received from the county on the 25th of December, the sum of five hundred and twenty-eight dollars for his services. The general land office at Washington, however, cut down this claim somewhat, and patented to the county only 2720 acres of the large amount selected by Mr. Betts.

The year 1859, witnessed a number of changes in the office of Superintendent of Schools, Geo. Coonly resigning the office on the 19th of March, which remained vacant until July 22d, when G. S. Killiam was appointed to fill the vacancy. He soon resigned the office, and on Oct. 20th, O. S. Wight was appointed to fill the vacancy. At a special election held April 6th, it was voted to build a bridge across the Little Sioux River, and a 7 mill tax to meet the expense, also voted for. This bridge was built by R. M. Blain, for the sum of \$1600 and was completed Nov. 15th, 1859. At this time, there was no saw mill within a reasonable distance, and the stringers and plank for the bridge were sawed with a "whip saw" by Mr. Phipps and his partner. This bridge was upon the site of the present one near the old town. To accommodate the traveling public, while the bridge was being built, a ferry franchise was granted to Mr. Phipps, and he built and run a ferry boat until the bridge was completed.

On the 14th of November, the Co. Judge issued the first marriage license to C. Corbett and Rosabella Cummings, who were married on the 29th inst., this being the first wedding in the county.

At the general election that year, there were 20 votes east, and the fol-



selected:—G. W. Sheriff; L. Parkhurst, Recorder; G. W. Laimage Commissioner; M., Surveyor; O. S. of Schools; Geo. W. Griff; A. Haynes, County lost an excellent by the resignation of win, of the office of Co. 4th of March, the due were performed by District Court, B. W. the 16th of November, there was a general setting accounts of the differ- cers, and the clerk was \$5 for his services from to Nov. 16, 1860. The Recorder, \$62 95 for the same time, and \$2 50, "haleyon days,

1860) there were only cast for the different s; the following parties —O. S. Wight, County . Sawtell, Dist. Clerk; rveyor; B. W. Sawtell, Phipps, Supervisor.— d the anomaly of one ituting "the Board of however, there was but s for the Board to trans- Phipps got along very eetings of the Board be- zed by a spirit of unan- rays witnessed in later the 16th of August, Mr. appointed to the office of Bannister having left the but appointing a deputy. October election, there was

of Schools; A. Phipps, Supervisor.

The year 1862, was a very quiet one for the county officials, so far as the transaction of county business was concerned, there being nothing of any importance transacted. There were 16 votes cast at the fall election, and B. W. Sawtell elected Clerk; R. Perry, Sheriff; A. Phipps, O. S. Wight, and J. A. Brown, Supervisors.

January 19, 1863, the Board of Supervisors made a contract with J. H. Cornell to erect a court house for the county, at a cost of \$1900, and the present edifice was built that year.— At the October election, there were only seven votes cast, this being the smallest vote ever polled in the county at a general election. The following officers were elected:—O. S. Wight, County Judge; C. Corbett, Treasurer & Recorder; R. Perry, Sheriff; O. S. Wight, Supt. of Schools; O. S. Wight, Clerk of Dist. Court; A. Phipps, T. Scurllock, Supervisors. At this time O. S. Wight was the legal incumbent of only four different county offices, but he bore his honors meekly, and the universal testimony of old citizens is, that he made a good official.

On the 12th of January, 1864, the Board of Supervisors having become alarmed at the operations of that notorious gang of county warrant swindlers, who had control of some of the adjacent counties, and fearing their presence here if there was anything visible to tempt their cupidity, concluded to remove temptation from the sight of the thieves, by selling the swamp lands of the county. A contract was accordingly made with



the 10th day of February, and unanimously approved of by the people. The money was accordingly paid into the treasury, and the land deeded.—In March following, a contract was made with T. B. Twiford, to build a bridge across the Little Sioux River, near Rogers' Mill, for the sum of \$2000, of the swamp land fund. This bridge was completed in the fall of 1866, and the high water of the spring of 1867, carried the bridge entirely away, and it has never been replaced.

Nine votes were cast in the county at the November election, resulting as follows:—O. S. Wight, District Clerk; C. Corbett, Recorder; J. H. Davenport, Supt. of Schools; J. H. Davenport, Surveyor. The only memorable transaction of the year 1865, was the dividing the county into two civil townships, one being called Cherokee, the other Pilot, the whole county, previous to this time, having been in one civil township, and that called Cherokee. There were 18 votes cast at the general election, resulting in the election of F. Miller, County Judge; C. Corbett, Treasurer; F. Stiles, Sheriff; J. H. Davenport, Surveyor; G. E. Fisher, Supt. of Schools; R. Perry, Drainage Commissioner; O. S. Wight, Coroner. In 1866, a new bridge was built across the river near the old town, at a cost to the county of \$1192, and the township of Willow organized; but upon canvassing the votes in October, it was found there were only 8 voters in the proposed township, so the organization was indefinitely postponed. This year there were 25 votes cast with the following result:—G. W. Bannister, County Judge; E. Kingsbury, District Clerk; L. Phipps, Recorder; J. Seurlock, Coroner.

September 2d, 1867, was the birth day of two new civil townships, one

called Willow, and the other called Spring. The office of Sheriff went begging this year, Mr. Stiles having resigned. G. E. Fisher was appointed, but refused to serve, thereupon, Luther Phipps was tendered the office, he held it about four months, resigned, and S. Miller succeeded to the empty honor for the balance of the year. The election this year—1867—called out 50 voters, resulting in the election of G. W. Bannister, County Judge; C. Corbett, Treasurer; S. F. Miller, Sheriff; J. H. Davenport, Surveyor; G. E. Fisher, Supt. of Schools; S. B. Parkhurst, Coroner; John Doak, Drainage Commissioner.

1868 was a barren year, nothing transpiring worthy of a record here. 80 votes at the fall election made J. H. Davenport Clerk, and E. Kingsbury, Recorder. Three new civil townships were organized in 1869, called respectively Pitcher, Afton, and Cedar. The offices of Sheriff, Recorder and Superintendent of Schools, became vacant by the resignation of the incumbents, and the following named persons were appointed to serve until the next election:—C. H. Lewis, Recorder; R. J. Smith, Sheriff; O. Chase, Supt. of Schools. There were 210 votes deposited at the election this year, resulting in electing J. Armstrong, Auditor; G. Filer, Sheriff; A. L. Porter, Surveyor; O. Chase, Supt. of Schools; L. Rogers, Coroner.

The year 1870, was a memorable one for Cherokee. The I. F. & S. C. R. R., being completed through the county, gave her communication with the rest of the world, and brought a large influx of settlers. More money was appropriated for public improvements in this year than had been before since the organization of the county. The bridge at the old town



was repaired at an expense of \$2900. Mill creek was bridged at a cost of \$5140. Six bridges over the Maple were erected, costing in the aggregate, \$2243 and one small bridge in Spring township, cost \$185. Five more civil townships were organized, named Silver, Tilden, Sheridan, Amherst, and Liberty. 361 votes were polled at the last general election, resulting as follows:—C. Corbett, Recorder; C. F. Biddle, Clerk; R. L. Cleaves, Coroner. Mr. Chase having resigned the office of Supt. of Schools, J. H. Roe fills that office by appointment, and Wm. Nettleton of Cherokee township, J. H. Groves of Pilot, and Geo. Hoskins of Willow, were elected Supervisors. C. H. Lewis having resigned, Eugene Cowles was appointed County Attorney.

In drawing this short sketch of the official history of the county to a close, the writer cannot forbear remarking that a careful perusal of the records of the county for the facts as herein before set forth, has convinced him that Cherokee county has been singularly fortunate in having had an honest, intelligent set of officers, who have apparently endeavored faithfully to discharge the duties of their several stations. The records are well kept, and in good condition, and if the impress left upon them during the next fourteen years, shall bear the same evidence of honesty and economy as does that of the last fourteen years, the citizens of the county may well be proud of them.

In the county are three civic societies: Masons; Odd-Fellows, and Good Templars; three church organizations—Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalists. A Ladies' Benevolent Society, Lyceum, and 24 schools, taught by able teachers.

## A WORD TO THE LANDLESS.

There is still, in a few counties in Iowa, land subject to entry under the homestead and pre-emption acts.—By the former law any citizen, 21 years of age, may acquire a title to 80 acres of land, by paying \$14, (all the U. S. land in Iowa is within railroad limits), and any one who holds an honorable discharge from the United States Army, may enter double that amount. The *modus operandi* of acquiring the land is quite simple, and we will suppose we are speaking to those who are entirely ignorant of *how* and *when* and *where*, and desire information.

As to *when*, we say now, and for the following reasons:—The public domain is rapidly filling up, so that notwithstanding its immense size, the choicest of the land will soon be appropriated, and as far as Iowa is concerned, next summer, in all probability, will witness the surrender of the last acre of land by the general government. There is no use of waiting until the place settles, for it is self-evident if the country is settled, there can be no cheap government lands to be had. Certain obstacles have to be met with, though one tarries two or ten years, and the sooner one faces the difficulties the sooner will he have them conquered. Don't wait until you are *ready*, for one is scarcely ever as prepared for emigrating as he wishes to be. "Don't wait upon the order of your going, but go at once."

WHERE to go, is often quite as puzzling to the emigrant as anything else. The fields for immigration are so extended, and each sets forth its claims so that it is really difficult for those desiring to locate, to decide whether Texas or Minnesota or somewhere



between is the better place. In selecting a new home, it is well to locate as nearly as possible in a place of like temperature, to that formerly lived in, and to those accustomed to the bracing atmosphere of a northern climate. Iowa offers as great a transition as is advisable to make. The subject of health is one of vast importance, and Northern Iowa has no superior in that respect. The summers are pleasant, exceedingly so; the winters are very mild. Besides the accessibility of this region is largely in its favor, being intersected by lines of railway from the Mississippi to the Missouri, connecting our new counties with the east as directly as if they were a century old.

We have neither the heat of Kansas nor the cold of Minnesota, the drouth of the former, nor the rains of the latter, but a climate and soil superior to either. There is not a species of grain or fruit grown in the northern or middle states, that cannot be cultivated here, unless we except peaches. Cattle have unlimited range at present, over a pasturage equal to anything in this or any other country. The water is excellent, clear as crystal, and has a sweet, agreeable taste. There are numerous streams and lakes, well wooded, and possessing fish in abundance; deer and elk are plenty, and prairie chickens everywhere. We have good markets and plenty of them. Goods are sold very reasonably, especially those of lighter quality. Everything one raises meets a ready market.

As to how to locate lands, the matter is quite simple. Select your point, say Cherokee County; drop off at our station, and if for a homestead, push back to O'Brien, get someone to show you over the lands, and go to the land office at Sioux City and have

your papers made out. If willing to buy land, go to any of our local land offices, and there you will learn of all that is for sale. There are 200,000 acres of railroad lands in this county, though hot in market, are being located, and will be sold on time, giving a firstrate chance for payment. These will, beyond all question, sell speedily, and one can afford to pay a good price for land close to the railway, when a mere trifle is required down, giving ten years to pay the whole.

Reader, you will do a wise thing by entering 160 acres of land in this county.

#### STATE OF IOWA.

The State of Iowa lies between the two great rivers of America, having the Mississippi on the east and the Missouri on the west. Its southern boundary is the parallel of 40 deg. 31 min. and its northern, that of 43 deg. 30 min. It has an area of 55,045 square miles, or 35,228,800 acres, being one-fourth as large as France, nearly as large as England, and double the size of Scotland. The surface of the State is gently undulating, but more uneven towards the west, than in the east. Nature seems to have been lavish in the bestowal of her favors upon the entire State. The streams that discharge their waters into the Mississippi, and those that discharge into the Missouri, drain the State so thoroughly that not an acre of waste land, may be said, to be in the State. Her water system is the most perfect in the Union, and consequently, her drainage the most thorough. The many advantages resulting from a gently wavy surface, thoroughly drained, are too well understood to acquire pointing out, but the purity of her air, and healthful-



ness of her climate are mainly attributable to that fact.

The quality of her soil may be equalled, but not surpassed by any in the world. While we can justly claim no similar area on the surface of the globe, can be found to equal Iowa in this respect. The soil is a drift deposit, covered with a deep, rich vegetable mold, along the streams it is alluvial, and everywhere capable of producing the most luxuriant vegetation. Her wild grasses are rank and luxuriant, and are famous for their nutritious qualities, giving the beef fed from them a peculiarly excellent flavor.

In regard to mineral deposits, Iowa ranks high as a State. Her extensive beds of coal are a source of incalculable wealth, and are diffused over the State, and said to embrace an area of 20,000 square miles. Mines are already worked in no less than forty counties. The nearest to Cherokee being those at Fort Dodge, in Webster county, a distance of 80 miles, connected by means of the Dubuque & Sioux City railroad. Coal is laid down at this station for \$6 00 per ton.

There are also large fields of peat, which have attracted considerable attention though not extensively worked. The peat beds are chiefly confined to the northern counties. The nearest to Cherokee, being in the county of Kossuth, about 60 miles distant. Splendid deposits of clay are found in many counties, suitable for brick-making. Cherokee has very extensive deposits of this valuable article, sufficient to fashion brick for ten times the requirements of the county. The railroad facilities of Iowa are second to no state in the Union. Five trunk lines connect the Mississippi and Missouri, and those

are intersected by a number of other lines, giving complete facilities for travel and shipping of produce to and from the several counties, in all over 2,000 miles of railway are now operated. Cherokee has a road passing through the centre of the county, over which, pass three trains daily.

Although scarcely *one-sixth* of the state is under cultivation, Iowa produced in 1869, over 25,000,000 bushels of wheat; 19,000,000 bushels of oats; 78,000,000 bushels of corn; and of hay, 13,000,000 tons; of potatoes, she produced 5,000,000 bushels. Her product of butter was 12,000,000 lbs. During the year 1868, in the state of Iowa, stock to the value of \$20,549,977 was sold. Educationally, Iowa stands pre-eminent among her sister states. One thirty-sixth of her entire domain, besides 500,000 acres of land donated by Congress, and 5 per cent. on the sales of her public lands in the state are appropriated to the support of the schools of Iowa. There is paid annually to teachers in this state, \$1,500,000, there are over 7,000 schools and 11,000 teachers in Iowa. Iowa has besides many charitable institution in a flourishing condition, supported by the state. Iowa forms the single exception among the states of the Union of having no indebtedness. This is a most important item to the immigrant as it secures for him light taxation. To the emigrant or any one seeking a home, Iowa offers superior inducements to any other state, and Cherokee to any other county.

## OUR COUNTY.

Cherokee county, is situated in the third tier of counties south of the Minnesota line and also east of the Missouri river, is among the many



beautiful counties of northern Iowa, pre-eminently inviting as a field of immigration. There are many who suppose that all prairie land is alike, but this is a great error, as differences are as great on these timberless plains, as in the heavily wooded sylvas of the east. Within the compass of a few miles, one finds numberless varieties of soil, each one of which has its peculiar adaption for husbandry. This is a great advantage to any country, and must hasten its development, as variety of products is as essential to the growth of a country as is quantity.

But there are other circumstances besides quality of soil upon which the desirability of a country depends, among which we might mention health, location, water, climate, &c., and in all of these respects Cherokee claims superiority over every other county in Iowa. The pureness and sweetness of her water is not excelled by any country in the world, and there is not a forty acres in the county in which we cannot find abundance within twenty feet of the surface.—Building material is the scarcest of all necessities in the West, the want of it is felt by every one, so much so that the cost of building a comfortable dwelling is not unfrequently beyond the means of the immigrant, and for lack of funds a temporary dwelling has to be improvised out of turf. We are situated a long way from large timber fields; all our pine lumber must be carried at least, 250 miles by rail, so no one need wonder that this article is high, yet, Cherokee has in this respect, a decided advantage over most western counties. She has inexhaustible beds of as fine clay as was ever moulded into brick, which can be manufactured for five or six dollars per thousand, hence in a few

years we may confidently expect this county to have comfortable and commodious brick houses on every farm, and her growing villages built of this valuable and desirable material.

The numerous mill privileges in this county surpass those of any five contiguous counties. There is water power enough here to drive sufficient machinery to supply the necessities of half a million of people. One grist mill is now running night and day, within two miles of this village, and the dams of *two* more are already built, both mills will be erected during the present year, giving the county nine run of stones. Another grist mill in Pilot township is doing excellent work, and supplying a want long felt in that part of the county. A wool mill is also projected for carding and spinning, and other industries will doubtless spring up to utilize the resources of our county.

A very erroneous impression prevails regarding the climate of Northwestern Iowa; most people have heard of it as a dreadfully cold country, where blighting winds excoriate the countenance, and the "snow-falls roar, devastating all before" is the fright of all. Now nothing could be farther from the truth than this, for a pleasanter and more congenial climate would be difficult to find. Snow seldom exceeds four inches in depth, and never lies later than the early part of March, cattle require feeding only about 12 weeks, and the greater part of that time they can pick largely from the meadows.

During the vernal and autumnal equinoxes the winds are usually high, but are of short duration; the balance of the year we enjoy "balmy breezes," as pleasant as those that "blow soft o'er Ceylon's Isle." The State of Iowa is the only one in the



Union free from debt, with a few millions in the treasury; but while so much can be said of the State, we regret many of the counties have been so wretchedly managed as to be next to insolvent. An immigrant should be careful in coming West to see where he locates, that his entire substance be not devoured by merciless officials. Cherokee is the only county in the Northwest that can show a clear record. She has but a trifling debt, yet has more substantial improvements than any half-dozen counties adjoining, each of which have debts, from \$30,000 to \$200,000.— Financially, Cherokee is the banner county of the Northwest, her taxes are light, her indebtedness is trivial. We wish to see these magnificent prairies, now beautiful in the garb of nature, made still more beautiful by the hand of man, and offer such advantages as no other county in the United States can offer.

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If any one will for a moment glance at the map of Northern Iowa, and observe that the county of Cherokee is centrally located between the flourishing villages of Fort Dodge, and Sioux City, and then make a trip between those places he cannot fail in coming to the conclusion that Cherokee is destined to be an important place. It is not enough to say this county has land equal to any other, we claim and shall insist until we have our claims allowed that the lands of the county of Cherokee are superior to those of any other county situated on the line of the Dubuque & Sioux City Railroad. There is not in reality an acre of waste land in the whole county. It is one expanse of the most superb table land, beautifully undulating, intersected by several never failing streams

whose banks are lined with a sufficiency of timber to supply the wants of the county for many years to come, with firing and the coarser grades of lumber. The soil is rich, beyond the possibility of exhaustion for the next fifty years, clothed in a verdure, out-rivaling the fabled elysium of antiquity, or the fairy dreams of modern Utopia. A few years ago, a number of strong hearted men from Massachusetts, seeing the more than Eden of fertility here, braved the dangers of the treacherous red man, planted themselves in the midst of these grassy plains, and began to cultivate the virgin soil. This formed the nucleus of a colony; these men were the pioneers of our civilization, many of whom are this day among the most honored and worthy men in the county, if not in Northern Iowa.

The population of the county is today, a mere fraction of what it can accommodate with large, valuable and beautiful farms. Thousands of these farms, yet to be the very finest in the United States, are robed still in their grassy vesture, whose bosoms are yet decked with the "heather bell" and prairie rose, but merely await the touch of the magic wand of science, when the richest trophies that ever rewarded the votaries of Ceres will be that of the favored owners of the soil. Could the New Englander, who is cutting up his little "gravel knoll" into mere garden patches for his family, or the backwoodsman of Michigan, killing himself in a warfare with huge oaks and giant pines, or the Canadian in his deadly fight with the grim forest, or the Virginian struggling with his exhausted plantation, or the emigrant escaped from a life of poverty in Europe, but once see these magnificent plains, the broadest, the grandest,



richest and fairest that ever honored the works of creation, they with one voice would say, let us go and possess the land, not figuratively, but literally "flowing with milk and honey."

### THE WATER SYSTEM OF CHEROKEE.

The largest stream that waters Cherokee county is the Little Sioux River, called *little* in contra distinction to a larger stream separating Iowa from Dakota. The little Sioux river is really one of the finest and most important streams in Northwestern Iowa. It rises near the Minnesota line; flows in a southwesterly course some 300 miles, and empties into the Missouri river. The valley of the Little Sioux is estimated to contain 5,000 square miles of the finest land in any state. This stream runs through the centre of Cherokee county, and is fed by a great number of tributaries, affording the most perfect drainage to the county. It is extremely circuitous, and meanders in passing through the county a distance of not less than 100 miles. Its banks are lined with forests of good servicable timber, in great variety, the chief being cottonwood, yet there are large quantities of oak, maple, and hickory. There are also considerable quantities of black-walnut of the most valuable description for furniture. There are many excellent mill privileges on this stream, as yet but three mill sites have been utilized, but there is supposed to be some 20 privileges on this river alone in this county. Along its banks, the land is, in parts, a little bluffy, but nowhere precipitous, and everywhere available. At times, beautiful parks and lawns open on the course of the

stream, decorated with fruit-bearing shrubbery, sweet-scented flowers, and luxuriant grasses. Its waters are cold and transparent, and stocked with incredible quantities of fish, which the writer has seen taken out in wagon loads. The value of this stream cannot be over estimated, and with its numerous tributaries affords as perfect a supply of stock water as can possibly be required.

The next most important stream is the Maple. This is also a river of considerable size, running for a long distance nearly parallel to the Little Sioux, before emptying into that stream. It enters in at the Northeast corner of the county, and flows about mid-way between the Sioux river and the eastern boundary of the county. Its waters are peculiarly transparent, fresh and beautiful. Its banks are not precipitous, but clothed with a beautiful verdure, or covered with groves of valuable timber. On this stream are many very valuable mill sites, and location of many a town and village, where yet the bounding deer and elk, with the finny and feathered tribes of nature are the only inhabitants.

The next largest water course is the Eleven Mile Run, being eleven miles west from the Sioux river, and running parallel to that stream. Its length is estimated at 100 miles, and consequently waters a considerable area. Its general features are similar to the above named streams, tho' considerably less in volume. While the Sioux waters the centre of the county, the Maple the east, and Eleven Mile Run the west, all flowing southwesterly and parallel. There are countless rivulets and streamlets coursing laughingly over these grassy meads that separate these waters, all tributary to them.



Mill Creek is by no means an insignificant stream. It takes its rise in O'Brien county, and after winding through some half-dozen townships, falls into the Little Sioux two miles above the village of Cherokee. It is quite a rapid stream, and by some estimated to have a good water power each mile of its course; here is, near its confluence with the Sioux, a neat and well built flouring mill, doing excellent work.

Railroad Run takes its rise near the township of Sheridan, and empties into the Sioux at the village of Cherokee; though only some ten miles long, it is a permanent stream and valuable for stock water.

Some miles to the south is Rocky Run, considerably larger and longer. This stream is of great value, and waters many a beautiful farm. Besides those named, there are probably 100 others of lesser dimensions, forming a complete network of streamlets and rills, such is seldom equalled and never surpassed by any other county in the United States. All of the larger of those streams abound in fish, mink and muskrats. Otter and beaver are also plenty, and form a large share of the winter's amusement of the residents trapping them. Residents of the eastern states, where there the rivers have been depleted of fish, can scarcely form an idea of their abundance and size in the virgin rivers of the west. These inland streams produce fish that weigh as high as 40 pounds. These streams have all less or more timber, though the great bulk of the timber in this county is found along the Sioux river. But the supply of water is nowise dependent on these rivers, as it is everywhere obtainable by digging. The usual depth of wells is 20 feet. The well water of Cherokee county

is peculiarly excellent, soft, clear, well-tasted and beautiful. In quality it can challenge the competition of the world, and in quantity, it is sufficient to support millions. Any farm not blessed with a running stream, can, by a few hours' labor, be supplied with an ample sufficiency for stock or anything else.

#### *COUNTY SEAT.*

The village of Cherokee, is the county seat of Cherokee county, and has a tolerable central location. It is situated at the intersection of the Dubuque & Sioux City R. R., with the Little Sioux River, and nearly midway between Fort Dodge and Sioux City. The village has a surpassingly beautiful site, skirted on all sides by gentle bluffs, that swell just enough to shield it from the blasts of winter, yet not enough to impare the beauty of the landscape. Through the vale and to the south of the village, the Sioux river winds its devious way in search of the great Missouri, where her crystalline waters are swallowed up in that current of mud. The banks of Sioux are lined with timber, the first of any consequence that greets the eye of the traveller after leaving Fort Dodge. This greatly adds to the picturesque ness of the scene, and prepossess the traveller in its favor.

The population of the village is about 500, and just the metal of which pioneers are made, hardy, persevering and irrepressible. The general character of the buildings, in the east, would be called indifferent, tho' not a few, even in old and wealthy places, would be termed fair, and some classed as good. So far they are all frame buildings, but constructed of pine lumber. Nearly every



building is painted, the prevailing color is white, giving the village a neat and tidy appearance. The railway passes through the centre of the village; the station house is the largest and finest on the road, from Fort Dodge to the terminus. The company make it a coaling station, and built a coal house there in the fall of 1870, the capacity of which is 600 tons; lately a turn-table was put in, and it is expected that Cherokee is to be the head of a division. The largest and finest building is the McLean House, built at a cost of \$8,000, and of capacity to accommodate 100 guests comfortably. There is a public Hall attached to the hotel, such as many towns of 20 years standing cannot equal. There are two other hotels of fair size. There are 5 grocery and provision stores, 3 clothing stores, 2 hardware houses, 2 drug stores, 4 blacksmith shops, 1 news depot, 1 furniture store, 2 meat markets, 1 millinery establishment, post office, 3 lumber yards, which sold in 6 months, 1½ million feet of lumber; 1 coal yard, 1 agricultural implement house, 1 harness shop, a school with 40 pupils, 3 physicians, 6 lawyers and real estate agents, a weekly republican newspaper, 1 grain warehouse and some minor places of business.

It should be borne in mind, that where this village stands, humming with business, one year ago was a wild, unsurveyed, tenantless prairie, and it was not until August 1870, that the village was located, though a few small buildings had been put up prior to that date, but only of such a character that they could be removed to whatever point the railway company might locate their depot.

The village of Cherokee offers splendid inducements for the investment of capital, in business, but those who

purchase merely to hold and speculate, will find the atmosphere of this place unsuited to their welfare.—There are schemes at present, in contemplation, that propose making Cherokee an important railway centre, giving her connection with St. Paul and Milwaukee, making her a competitive point with the Ill. Cen. R. R. We might here state, that the future of Cherokee is bright, as she forms the natural trade centre of *three* entire counties, with a united population of not less than 40,000 persons, and which are increasing so rapidly that in a few years these same counties will contain not less than 100,000 souls.

#### AURELIA,

A pleasantly located village between the Maple and Sioux rivers. This village has a good general store, a lumber and coal yard, a daily mail, and post office. The railway passes through it, giving it all necessary facilities. The prairies around Aurelia, are, by many considered the most beautiful in the State of Iowa; however this may be, certainly they are superbly beautiful and fertile, and on them will yet subsist the thousands who will make Aurelia a village of some importance.

#### HAZARD,

Six miles west of Cherokee, on the same line of railway. It has a general store and post office, a hotel and close to it the most extensive brick yard in Northern Iowa. The prairies around it are extremely rich, and settling up quickly. Hazard will yet be a considerable village.

#### MARCUS,

About six miles west of Hazard, is a station on the same railroad. It has a general store, a post office, and a telegraph station. The country around Marcus is very new, but is



locating rapidly. Marcus is destined to be a town of some importance, and is blest with a splendid stream of water, the Eleven Mile Run.

These are all the villages in Cherokee county as yet, but besides these are two post offices, making in all six in the county, giving all necessary advantages for mail.

#### ROADS.

There are roads everywhere, and all the streams are bridged. The county spent \$10,000 bridging streams last year, and perfect communication is established with every part of the county. The absence of stumps and stones render the plains perfectly smooth; teams can drive at random anywhere, with perfect safety, though it is always preferable to keep a beaten path. This county has no quagmires or pond-holes, rendering travel difficult or dangerous; every square foot of her soil may be traveled by night or day with perfect security.—Counties in east, 100 years old, have roads inferior to ours when the track is simply made.

#### FENCING.

According to the laws of Iowa, each county is allowed to decide for itself, whether to adopt or reject the Herd Law, the provisions of which require every one to guard his own stock, discarding the necessity of fences.—The farmer who breaks his land and sows his crop, need have no apprehensions of having his crops destroyed. Matters are completely reversed where this law is in force, from what they are in the more Eastern States. There, one is obliged to guard his crops, within certain limitations called a "lawful fence," but here he is compelled to guard his stock, and is held responsible for the damages committed by them. This gives perfect security to the agriculturist, whose

industries are protected from irresponsible stock grazers, who might in a single night, destroy his year's earnings. The temptations for stock to destroy grain, do not exist here as in old settlements, for the abundance of feed, and boundless range for them, removes anything like necessity.—Fencing is wholly unneeded, but a small place to enclose stock over night is desirable.

The State of Iowa offers great encouragement for the cultivation of timber, and the rapidity with which it grows, is truly astonishing, a growth of three or four years, being sufficient to stop ordinary cattle. In a few years we may expect to see the farms of this county protected by living fences, the most durable and beautiful of all fencing.

#### FRUIT.

Fruit has not been thoroughly tested in this county, yet there is not the shadow of a doubt but that it will do well here. All manner of small fruit produce luxuriantly, and attains the fullest perfection. Apple trees look healthy and thrifty, where ever tried. Counties in the northern tier, and in the eastern part of the State, have produced very superior samples of apples and pears, cherries and plums. But Cherokee has not yet had trees planted long enough to test their bearing qualities. There are abundance of wild plums and grapes along the rivers, these are of a superior quality for wild fruit; that grapes, apples, plums and pears can be raised equal in quality to any part of the State we doubt not.—Great quantities of trees have been set out, and no one entertains any fears of their success.

Melons attain more than a usual size in this county, and are produced in cart loads without effort. All vine



bearing annuals produce astonishingly. Squashes and pumpkins surpass belief, some of the former weighing as much as 120 pounds, though such a weight is by no means usual.

#### GRAIN.

All the staple grains are produced here abundantly. The soil is of a deep, rich, vegetable mould, varying from three to six feet in depth. This is practically inexhaustible and just suited for the growth of grain requiring the richness of ordinary compost.

Wheat averages here, through a succession of years, 25 bushels, over the county, yet this is certainly a low estimate, as most producers talk of 30 to 40 bushels per acre. Spring wheat is the only kind grown, as farmers prefer two crops to one. Wheat brings from 80 cents to 1 dollar this season.

Corn does extremely well, and averages 65 bushels per acre. It requires no working of any account, though if attended, would produce much more. Corn sells this season at 35 cents.

Oats produce usually from 50 to 100 bushels per acre. They are not extensively sown as corn in a great measure, supplies their place for feed. It is unnecessary to specify, as all the kinds of grain grown in the Northern and Middle States are produced here quite as abundantly, and with one-hundredth of the labor.

Potatoes are not only remarkable for their production, but the quality is equal to the most celebrated of Western Michigan. The yield is from 200 to 400 bushels per acre.

All manner of vegetables do extremely well. Cabbages, rutabagas and tomatoes, are no where surpassed, both in luxuriance and the richness of the product, and are never better than from the first breaking.

#### BUILDING MATERIAL, AND COST OF BUILDING—FENCING, &c.

Elsewhere in this pamphlet, it has been stated, that lumber suitable for building, has to be shipped here, as pine is not indigenous to the Northwest, and also that clay was plentiful. The cost of lumber, at this writing, and such prices have ruled for six months, varies from \$22 to \$45 per thousand. The best grades of dressed flooring bringing the latter price; dressed stock boards average \$35; shingles, "Star A," \$5.50 per thousand; siding and similar stock, sell at \$22. Stones are very scarce on the upland, but along the streams are found in abundance. No difficulty is found in procuring enough for foundations. Cellars do not require walling, the soil is so firm, and never loosens. The great abundance of brick clay and the ease with which brick can be made, will, by a little competition, make that article extremely cheap. One yard alone, near Hazard, has clay already seasoned for 500,000 brick to be made next season. This alone, will give material sufficient to build quite a number of comfortable farm houses. Lime, the best in Iowa, from Fort Dodge, is delivered all along the line at reasonable prices. Sand is abundant in Cherokee, and the quality of her gravel is such, that Sioux City carried from here, 60 miles, to gravel her streets. All the elements for building are found here, in abundance, and at rates that none need grumble. Labor is not excessively high.—Carpenters get from \$2 to \$3.00 per day, according to their worth. A comfortable frame house 18 x 24 feet, finished in good style, doors, windows and all belonging thereto, will cost from \$200, to \$300. If the labor is excepted, a deduction of \$75 may be



made. There are other and cheaper methods of building, viz: log houses, or turf houses. A log house need not cost more than \$25.00, and a turf one simply one's labor.

#### PEOPLE.

Some might be curious to know the character of the people of this county, as the fact of nationality has often a great influence over men's minds. Perhaps there is less mixture in this, than any other county. The inhabitants are almost purely eastern people, and have brought with them, all the habits of thrift, ingenuity and enterprise that characterizes the "live Yankee." There are a few others, English, Scotch, and Irish, but those of continental Europe are exceedingly rare. The people, taken as a whole, are just the kind needed to develope a young county, intelligent, open, generous and enterprising, ever ready to assist a stranger, and give him a weleome. If the new-comer means business, he will find every assistance, but, if he comes thinking to gonge out a living by peddling basswood hams for fresh meat, he may get himself undeceived rather prematurely for the suecess of his mission. Muscle and pluck are sure to win here, but if those articles are not available, they can be discounted by an equivalent in greenbacks.

#### STOCK RAISING.

The county of Cherokee, is admirably adapted for the purposes of stock raising. Her luxuriant grasses, numerous streams, and shaded groves, render her the first among all her sister counties, for the raising of stock. These are peculiar to her, while she shares her measure of the climatic causes that make this latitude so well adapted to that end.—True, Kansas or Texas can produce a like weight in beef, cheaper than

Northern Iowa, but that difference in cost is more than balanced in the relative value of the article produced. This is attributable to the quality of the grasses, despite the difference in climate. Horses and cattle roam during summer and winter over these prairies, and without housing, keep fat and glossy. The grass is so nutritious that teams work on it, without grain and keep fat. A poor animal is a rarity on these prairies, for just imagine an animal wading in grass from one to six feet high, in quality better than timothy, or blue stem. The grasses of Northwestern Iowa, are largely supplied with sacharine juices, so admirably adapted to nourish animal life. Its strength giving qualities are apparent, when teams work the year round and keep fat, never tasting grain. At present the range is unlimited, and stock breeders, can travel nomadic like, hither and thither, wherever deemed the most advisable to pitch their tents. A ready market is afforded for all stock, cattle and horses. Sheep have not yet been raised to any extent, but no species of stock would pay better. Anyone who visits our broad, limitless plains, with their tens of billions of tons of hay that are left to rot every season, over which cattle and horses roam, in company with droves of deer and elk, then turn east to the little 20 or 50 acre fields, a sense of pity seizes the observer, for the poor, fenced up farmers and their shrivelled stock.

#### BREAKING.

The sod is not so dreadfully hard as to require the force to break it, that is usually supposed in the east. Hundreds of people break with *one span* of horses, and a good heavy team well fed, can do it all the season, but the most common method is



to break with three horses, and three are considered enough, everywhere. From one to two acres is considered a days work for one team, and that can be kept up the whole breaking season. The breaking season does not last longer than two months, June and July, a circumstance that people in the east would do well to remember, and come out early in the spring, by so doing, they can break in June and plant corn, potatoes, and other necessary vegetables, thus securing a supply of food immediately. Those who have no teams, can get any quantity broken, at \$3 to \$4 per acre, so that very limited means will start a man out. Should he hire ten acres to break, cost, say \$40, this will give him seven acres of corn, two of potatoes, and leave one acre for other vegetables. Call the corn, less than half a crop, say 25 bushels per acre, at the market price of to-day, the corn alone will over pay the expense, while he has the balance of his crop for his labor. Some farmers in this county broke last season as high as 150 acres.

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AMHERST TP., Feb. 9, 1871.

*Editor Times* :—I send as promised, a few facts in regard to this tp. Amherst is in the western part of the county, and the second township from the north line. The railroad crosses the north-eastern part; the nearest station, Marcus, being located just across the town line, being the most northerly station on the entire route from Dubuque to Sioux City. The old military and emigrant road crosses the township two miles from the north line. The land is of the same general type that prevails in the county, gently rolling prairie, watered by several streams, the head waters of the West Fork of the Little

Sioux, and well drained by narrow sloughs; there is no waste land in the township. The soil is the usual deep prairie mold, subsoil a heavy clay; wells and cellars stand for a time without walling. Water of excellent quality is found from ten to thirty feet of the surface.

The first homesteads were taken May, 1869. First breaking done in June of the same year; first family to settle in the township, was that of Matthias Smith. The township was organized last fall, and the first election was held October 11th, 1870.—The present population is about 50. Two or more schools will be established the coming season. The largest amount of breaking (single improvement) sixty-five acres. Every settler has planted, or is preparing to plant groves of native timber. Game, in the game season, i. e., chicken season, is abundant; wolves, foxes, deer, and elk are seen occasionally.

From the experience of the past season, I can say the soil has a wonderful capability for withstanding droughts, and maturing crops without rain; vegetation retained its color and freshness through two months of burning heat.

Entered land is valued at about \$5 per acre. There are fine opportunities for stock farms along the creek called Eleven Mile Run, a never failing stream, that crosses the township from north to south. Grasses of the red top variety was cut near this stream last season, that yielded by the estimate of moderate judges, three tons per acre.

At Marcus station there is a telegraph and post-office established, a grocery is also opened, and we receive our supplies of coal and building material at that point. Our people are of an intelligent, industrious



class, and those who may come to settle among us, bachelors excepted, will be well received. Single men are not wanted, as the vicinity is already overstocked with that uninteresting class of settlers.

I remain, Respectfully Yours,  
M. E. HINKLEY.

*Editor Times:*—At your request I will jot down a few of my experiences in farming. I moved my family into Cherokee county, May 3d, 1869, and commenced breaking prairie on the 10th; I used three horses and a 14 inch plow. I think prairie breaks harder here, than in the central part of the State, or in Northern Illinois. I finished breaking July 12th, 1869, having broke ninety acres. April 5, 1870, I commenced sowing wheat; sowed 45 acres, and finished April 20th, 1870, sowed a bushel and three pecks to the acre. I commenced to sow oats on the 21st of April, sowed 23 acres and finished on the 25th; sowed three bushels to the acre. The above grain was sowed on breaking without being cross-plowed. For corn ground, I turned back the sod part in November, 1869, and the balance in May, 1870; I dragged the ground over twice, then marked out with a sulky plow, and planted May 10, 11, and 12th. On the 28th of April, I planted  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of potatoes. Now as to yield: wheat,  $11\frac{1}{2}$  bushels to the acre; oats, 21; corn, 12. The reason grain was so light this year, was want of rain. Potatoes yielded 50 bushels, besides what a family of six ate from the time they were large enough to eat until digging time.

I commenced cutting wheat on the 15th of July, averaged through harvest, 12 acres per day, with Buckeye Reaper & Mower.

A word about stock raising and I

am done. I wintered a number of head of cattle in the winter of 1869 and 1870, and did not feed grain to only my work cattle, and all came out in splendid order in the spring. What horses I did not work, wintered the same way, and I have done the same thus far this winter, and my stock are all doing well.

One word about planting fruit and forest trees. I planted one acre of forest trees, mostly cottonwood; nearly all of them grew, most of them making a growth of two feet, in spite of the dry weather. I also planted one hundred and five fruit trees. I planted an orchard in Illinois, and one in Franklin county, in this State, and think the one planted by me this summer, did as well as either of them did the first season. Such is my experience in farming in Cherokee county. I have farmed in Illinois and in Franklin county in this State, but think this is decidedly preferable to either, both as regards climate and soil.

W.M. NETTLETON.

The first month's sales of village lots in Cherokee, 98 lots were disposed of, aggregating \$17,310, being an average of \$176 63 per lot.

Up to Dec. 2nd, the Railroad Co., had, through Capt. Roe, of Cherokee, entered the "Right of Refusal," to 17,800 acres of land in this county.—Now, outsiders, if you want land in this county, you have got to stir around.

The first sermon ever preached in Cherokee village, was in the store of H. A. Fife, by the Rev. Alex. Darley, Presbyterian.

Wheat is selling here at present at one dollar per bushel.

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A SKETCH OF EVENTS  
IN THE EARLY SETTLEMENT  
OF CHEROKEE COUNTY, IOWA

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